



State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Testimony in Support of House Bill 5003
Appropriations Committee
March 18, 2022

Chairwomen Osten and Walker, Ranking Members Miner and France, and members of the Appropriations Committee, the Republican Caucus would like to thank the committee for raising *HB 5003, An Act Concerning the Unemployment Trust Fund*.

We thank the committee for its diligence in ascertaining the status of the previously appropriated \$155 million. Republicans fought for and compromised on parts of the underlying budget during the 2021 session and continue to feel strongly that using ARPA funds to ensure the solvency of the Unemployment Trust Fund (UTF) is a wise use of federal tax dollars, especially given that so many of our residents have relied on the UTF during the government shut down of thousands of private businesses across our state. While the legislature viewed this measure as a priority, we were shocked to learn that only recently, on February 22, 2022, were two payments to this Fund totaling \$125 million processed by the Comptroller's office. That is exactly 275 days after Governor Lamont signed the compromise budget and these payments still fail to allocate the full amount of funding that was included in the budget. An additional \$30 million remains to be allocated. This is unacceptable. We share your frustration with how this previous allocation was handled by the executive branch, specifically by the Department of Labor.

However, we continue to believe that utilizing ARPA funds for this purpose is important for those looking for jobs and those creating them. Therefore, we ask again for an additional \$245 million to be dedicated to the Unemployment Trust Fund. This would align with our previous ARPA plan that we drafted in 2021.

We thank you for your consideration of this proposal and hope that you will allow it to be voted on by the full General Assembly.